TEAMSTERS LOCAL 728 at WORK

Enforcing Our Rights

Ernest Spencer was terminated for six months until union action put him back to work in February. Members have won more than $23,000 in grievance awards at UPS.

See story page 7.

Protecting Teamster Jobs

Holland stewards, including Chris Vernon and Don Norrell (above, left), defend jobs and rights in a company change of operations.

See complete freight coverage on page 6.

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UNION CALENDAR

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

- March 12 at 10 AM
- April 9 at 10 AM
- May 14 at 10 AM

FREIGHT MEETINGS

- March 12 at 9 AM
- April 9 directly after the union meeting
- May 14 at 9 AM

UPS MEETINGS

- March 12 directly after the union meeting
- April 9 at 9 AM
- May 14 at 9 AM (due to pension clinic).

STEWARDS TRAINING

- March 19, 9:30 AM to 3 PM

ORGANIZERS TRAINING

April 23, 8:30 to 4 PM

PLANNING YOUR PENSION CLINIC

May 14. 11 AM to 2 PM. You must pre-register to receive an up-to-date status report on your pension. See page 5 for details.

RETIREE CLUB MEETINGS

March 8, May 10, Sept. 13, Nov. 8 at 8 AM

TEAMSTERS LOCAL 728 at WORK

Official Publication of Teamsters Local 728

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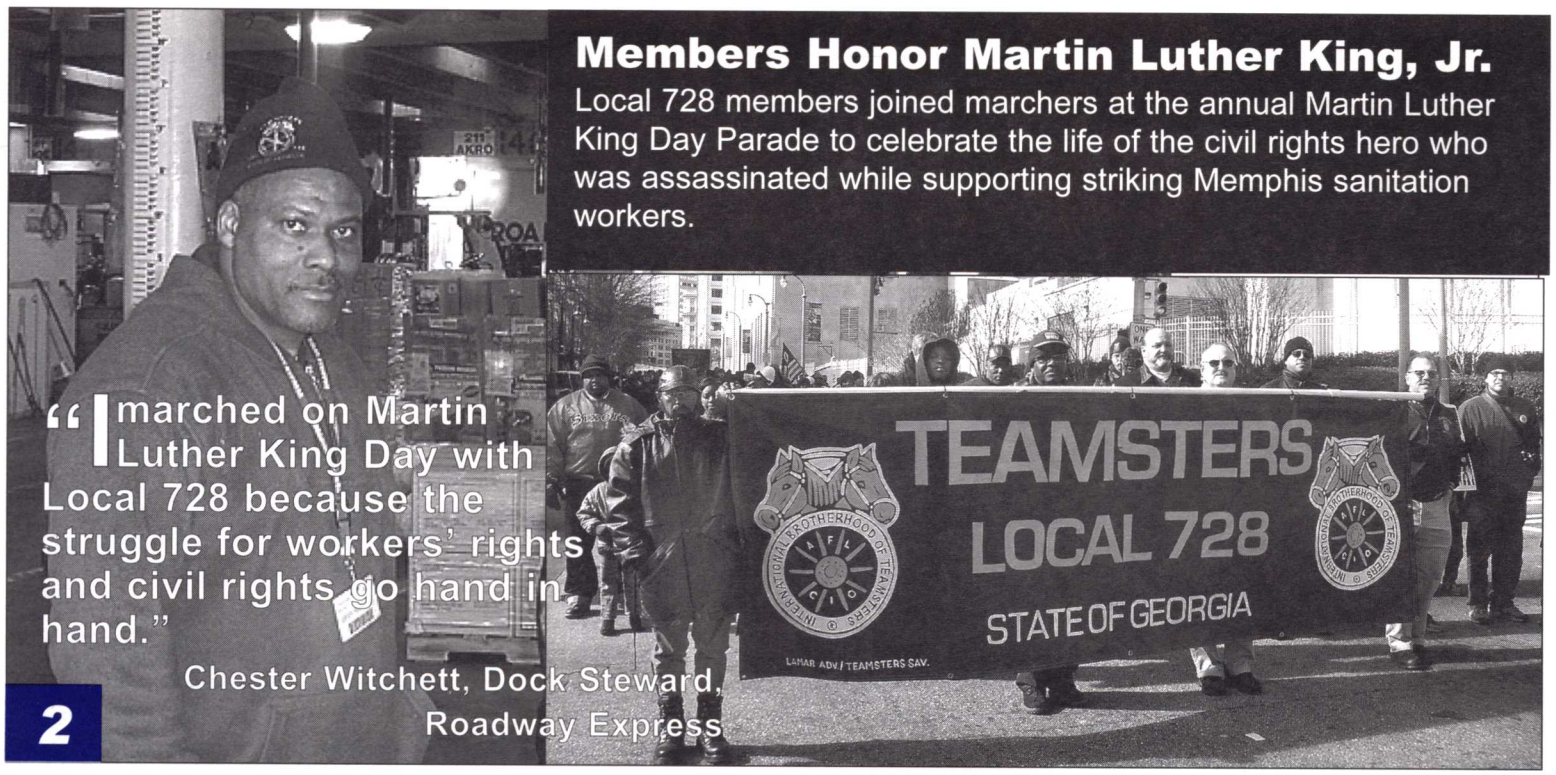
Larry Macdonald, Sec.-Treas
Johnny Gabriel, Vice-Pres.
Scott Webber, Rec.-Sec
Trustees:
Rodney McGriff
Paul Parker
Alonzo Williamson



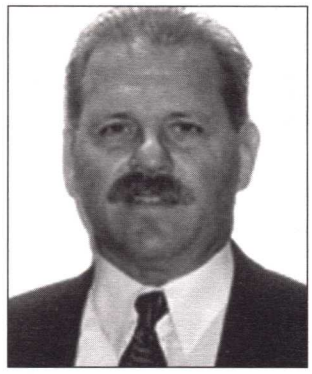
Members Honor Martin Luther King, Jr.

Local 728 members joined marchers at the annual Martin Luther King Day Parade to celebrate the life of the civil rights hero who was assassinated while supporting striking Memphis sanitation workers.

"I marched on Martin Luther King Day with Local 728 because the struggle for workers' rights and civil rights go hand in hand."

Chester Witchett, Dock Steward, Roadway Express

Challenges and Opportunities



By Randy Brown, Local 728 President

As 2005 unfolds, we face new challenges. As we go to press, Yellow has announced its intent to purchase USF. This consolidation comes on the heels of Yellow's earlier buyout of Roadway. Its impact remains to be seen. Yellow has only just begun its use of the new "premium service" language in the contract in the midwest region. Good Teamster jobs are at stake if consolidation results in the work being performed by fewer and fewer employees.

Teamsters at UPS face different but still difficult challenges. The company's reengineering of work – using the new PAS/EDD systems – is squeezing yet more work out of hard working UPS Teamsters. Other challenges include the growing role of UPS Logistics, a recent negative NLRB decision regarding clerks brought into the union under the last contract, and the ongoing problems members face day to day, such as excessive overtime.

The threat to Teamster benefits are also of great concern. As trustees on the Central States Fund, freight employers and UPS voted to slash our benefits. Now they are trying to capitalize on the problem they created by encouraging union-busting efforts under the cover of changing pension plans.

We must do everything possible to defend member pension and health benefits – and restore them to the levels that other Teamster funds have shown are possible. This includes standing up to attacks on Capitol Hill where employer lobbyists are pushing legislation that would gut working Teamsters' pension rights.

On the other hand, challenges can also be opportunities. Yellow's purchase of USF could potentially give the IBT additional leverage to organize Dugan and other non-union divisions of USF. FedEx's expansion in ground service, likewise, could create a foothold for Teamster organizing in non-union parcel. Another hopeful sign on this front was the NLRB's recent ruling that FedEx Ground contractors be considered employees for the purposes of union certification elections.

We can meet difficult challenges and make the most of opportunities if we stay focused on our strengths. Information, coordination, smart strategies and democracy are the cornerstones of unity and power.

In 2005, we need to build on these strengths so we can defend our contracts and working conditions and win new improvements going forward.

It is very encouraging to see the degree to which members and stewards are stepping up to the plate to meet the challenges we face. I want to personally thank you for your dedication and commitment.

Our union's greatest strength is its active members and we want to hear from you. If you have a suggestion on how we can improve our union, or even just a question, do not hesitate to call me. Together, we will build a better future for working families.

Financial Changes Put Your Dues to Work for You

Local 728 has adopted a series of financial reforms which will save our union nearly $50,000 every year, freeing up resources for programs that benefit members.

■ Effective February 11, 2005, we have cut approximately $16,000 from the salaries of the top officers of our local.

From now on, business agent salaries will be fixed to to the hourly rate of UPS Feeder Drivers–with a provision made for a set amount of overtime at straight time pay (seven hours). This will keep salaries for business agents within the pay range of the majority of full-time members.

■ Additional changes will save more than $30,000 a year. The largest single reform is a change in the rules governing unused vacation by officers and business agents.

Formerly, officers and business agents could roll over up to ten vacation days every year. They could also cash in up to ten days of unused vacation.

Under the new policy, officers and agents will not be allowed to sell back or roll over vacation from year to year.

Building a Stronger Union

Members at Acuity Brands (ZEP Manufacturing) Gear Up for Contract Negotiations

At a meeting on Saturday February 5th, members from Acuity Brands/ZEP Manufacturing met to discuss how they can win improvements in their contract which expires in May.

Members came to discuss problems with the current contract and to makes plans to involve Teamster members in winning improvements.

"Unity at Acuity" will be the name of the effort to get an improved contract. The campaign has three man aspects:

1. Building Unity by increasing the visibility of the union and increasing the number of members at ZEP.

2. Involving the members in determining priorities for the contract.

3. Organizing to enforce the contract that is currently in place.

The meeting ended on an optimistic note, with members taking bundles of contract surveys and pledging to get the surveys distributed among their coworkers.

Members have launched a campaign to build Unity at Acuity. Pictured here are the shop stewards who are help making it happen along with Business Agent Scott Webber.

Retiring from Work, Not From the Union

Stay connected to the union after you retire by getting involved in the retiree club. The club organizes support for Teamster retirees and provides solidarity to organizing drives and union campaigns.

Membership dues are $20.00 per year for individuals and $30.00 per year for couples.

Membership forms are available at the local union or you can contact us via email at Retireeclub728@aol.com.

Club officers include: Sandra Presley, (President), Ronnie Presley (Vice President), Charles Harmon (Recording Secretary), Portia Ponder (Treasurer), Thomas Beavers, Edsel Davis, Bill Lowe (Trustees) and K.B. Mims (Chaplain).

Uniting for First Contracts at Newly Organized Companies

TEAMSTERS ORGANIZING FOR POWER

Bargaining sessions to win a first contract at sanitation giant BFI, which had slowed towards the end of last year, are moving forward. The company has taken an aggressive stance, refusing to bargain over the Lawrenceville facility.

In response, IBT organizers have put the heat on BFI management by leafleting BFI customers and encouraging supporters in the community to call BFI protesting the company's refusal to bargain over the Lawrenceville facility.

A recent organizing victory will also help keep the pressure on this anti-union corporation. On January 21 workers at BFI transfer stations in Marietta, Smyrna, and East Point voted unanimously to join Local 728.

Bargaining has restarted with BP/Amoco with progress being made on non-economic issues. Negotiations with Iron Mountain Information Management are scheduled to restart on March 8th.

Planning Ahead for Your Retirement

"I put in for my pension but they have sent me a letter that says I have fewer years credit than I thought. How can this be and what can I do about it?"

When thinking ahead about your retirement it is important to know that a number of factors can impact your final credited years of service. Members should consider checking their credit status periodically throughout their career.

Don't Get Caught By Surprise!

Be Aware of the Factors that Could Affect Your Pension Benefit.

Factors that may affect your total credited years can include:

- Part-time years worked at UPS.
- Transferred from one pension fund to another in a change of operations.
- Being disabled and unable to work for a long period of time.
- Breaks in service for other reasons.

You may also find that the fund has inadvertently left out a portion of your credited service.

If you spot a discrepancy, contact the fund promptly with documentation showing your credited employment.

For more information, contact the Local 728 benefits department, or attend the upcoming Planning for Your Retirement Clinic.

Planning for Your Retirement Clinic

Saturday, May 14
11 AM to 2 PM
Local 728 Union Hall

You must pre-register in order to receive an up-to-date status report on your pension. Call Local 728 at 404-622-0521.

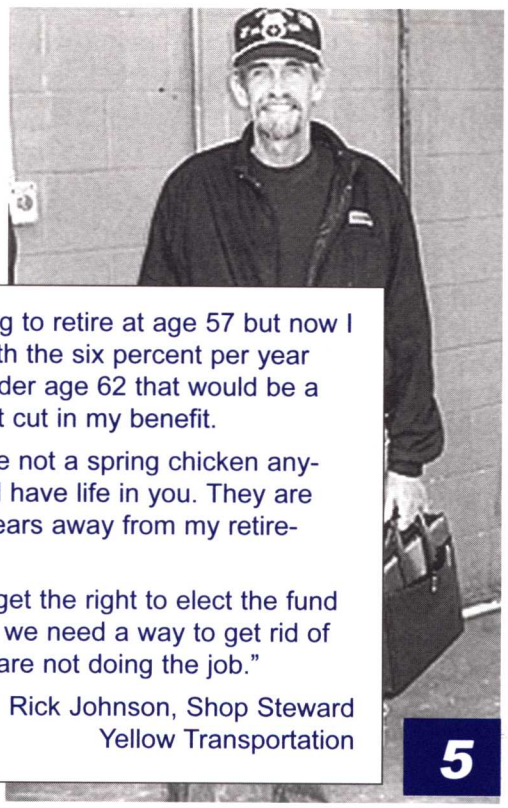
Local 728 Asks Central States for Answers on Pension Benefits

Local 728 President Randy Brown has written the Executive Director of the Central States Pension Fund asking for an explanation for the pension cuts and for the fund's plans to address the problems.

Some of the questions include:

- Now that the fund has experienced very strong investment returns in 2003 and solid returns in 2004, what action is the fund taking to restore the benefit cuts–in whole or in part?
- What steps has the fund taken, or does it intend to take, to work with the parties to increase employer contributions?
- Why has the Central States Fund done so much more poorly than other Teamster Funds in weathering the so-called Perfect Storm?

We will keep you informed of the fund's response.



"I was going to retire at age 57 but now I can't. With the six percent per year reduction under age 62 that would be a thirty percent cut in my benefit.

At 57 you are not a spring chicken anymore but still have life in you. They are taking five years away from my retirement.

We need to get the right to elect the fund trustees and we need a way to get rid of them if they are not doing the job."

Rick Johnson, Shop Steward
Yellow Transportation

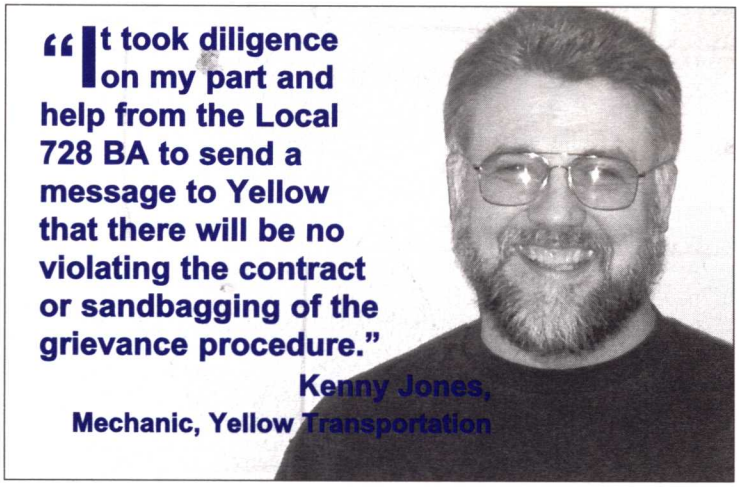
Freight News

Roadway Office Clericals Fight Attack on Bargaining Unit Work

Management at Roadway has consistently tried to chip away at bargaining unit work in the office.

In a successful effort to fight this problem, Local 728 members and stewards have filed and won a number of grievances. Management has agreed to pay two hours pay for each of the violations.

Good documentation prepared by the members and stewards was the key to winning these cases, with stewards stepping up to settle the grievances.


"It took diligence on my part and help from the Local 728 BA to send a message to Yellow that there will be no violating the contract or sandbagging of the grievance procedure."
Kenny Jones,
Mechanic, Yellow Transportation

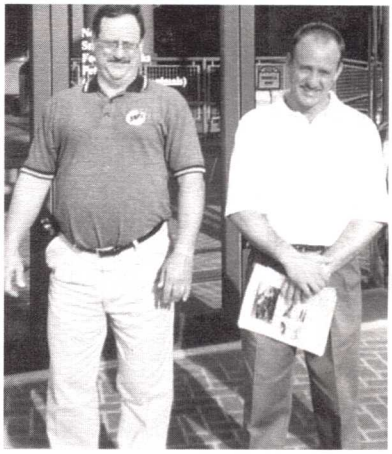
Yellow Mechanics Win Long Battle to Preserve Right to Wear Shorts

On May 1, 2003 Yellow Transportation mechanic Kenny Jones walked into work wearing shorts, as is his right under the freight contract. Management immediately sent him home.

The issue went unresolved for the rest of that year and again on May 1, 2004 Jones reported for work in shorts. Management sent him home again and then sent home nine second shift mechanics when they wore shorts one sweltering mid-summer day.

Finally, union action has put an end to Yellow's sandbagging on this issue. At the beginning of February management agreed to abide by the contract in the future, paying the original grievant's lost time. Other member's back pay will be decided at committee.

New Agreement Protects Jobs in Holland Change of Operations



Stewards Chris Vernon and Don Norrell at the January freight panel hearings.

USF Holland has proposed two changes of operations that will affect Local 728 members. We have negotiated an agreement with the company over the first proposed change. Negotiations over a second change continue.

Holland is opening a second stand-alone terminal in Norcross, not twenty-five miles from the main terminal. Members and stewards raised the concern that workers who move to the new terminal could be laid off at some point even if work was available at the original terminal.

To address this problem, Holland city and road stewards worked with Local 728 to negotiate metroplex agreement language stating that members laid off for more than two weeks at either terminal will have the right to bump into the other terminal.

"This will protect members down the road," business agent David Garmon said of the agreement. "We need to be vigilant. Any change of this kind can result in the loss of good Teamster jobs."

The Southern Region Freight Division has approved the change as negotiated.

Negotiations continue over the next Holland change of operations, which involves the shifting of work to the Chattanooga terminal. We will keep you informed.

Your Freight BA Team
From left to right: Scott Webber, David Garmon, Doris Cash, Larry Macdonald.

Members Take On Monetary and Other Grievance Issues at UPS

Members Win More Than $23,000 in Backlogged Settlements

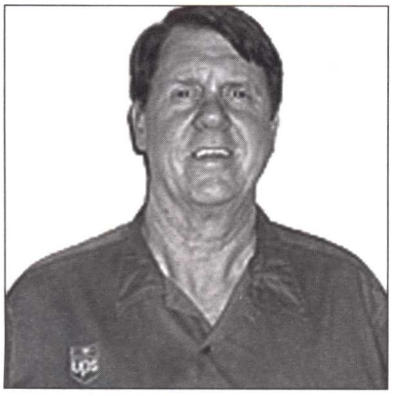
Local 728 members are taking on UPS through the grievance procedure–and putting money in their pockets as a result.

In the last two months, members have won over $23,000 in grievance settlements and more than 100 grievances on non-monetary issues.

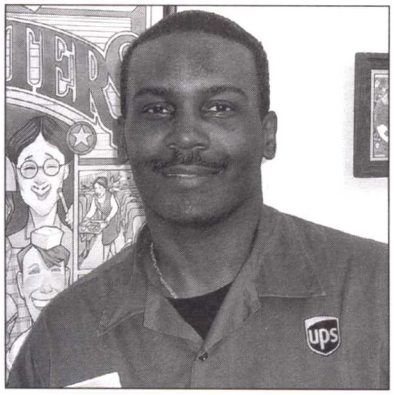
One preloader at the Pleasantdale hub won more than $1,600 in settling a series of backlogged grievances over supervisors working and paycheck errors. He is using that money to pay for his college tuition.

UPS Teamsters are making headway on hundreds of unsettled grievances–some dating back to 2003. Hats off to the stewards and members who have helped make this possible.

Boosting Representation for UPS Members
The UPS business agent team includes, from left to right: Alan Lamb, Donnie Dixon, Alonzo Williamson, Chris Perault and Eric Robertson. Not pictured: Robert Duncan, Butch Traylor and Robert Wood (part-time feeder steward)



David Skidmore



Ernest Spencer

Discharged Drivers Returned to Work

Driving is one of the most dangerous occupations and accidents can happen to excellent drivers with good records. That is what happened to two Local 728 members recently.

Package car driver David Skidmore, with thirty years on the job, had an accident on a narrow rural road outside of Macon. Too little room and poor shoulders on roads like these can create hazards for UPS vehicles.

UPS discharged Skidmore. He feared that at best he'd face many months out of work while awaiting the result of his grievance.

Instead, UPS BA's Robert Duncan and Butch Traylor stepped in, and fought to get Skidmore returned to work quickly.

"If Local 728 had not gone to bat for me I would not be back on the job today."Skidmore said.

Atlanta Feeder Driver Ernest Spencer found himself in similar circumstances.

Despite twenty six years on the job, he was discharged after an accident. But fast action by Local 728 has also won Spencer his job back.

"Local 728 worked hard on my case and looked out for my best interests," Spencer said.

We need to protect good Teamster jobs, and long-time careers, with effective representation.

Ask David Skidmore and Ernest Spencer how important it is to have a strong union.

Democracy is Power

Local 728 wants your ideas on how we can build a stronger union.

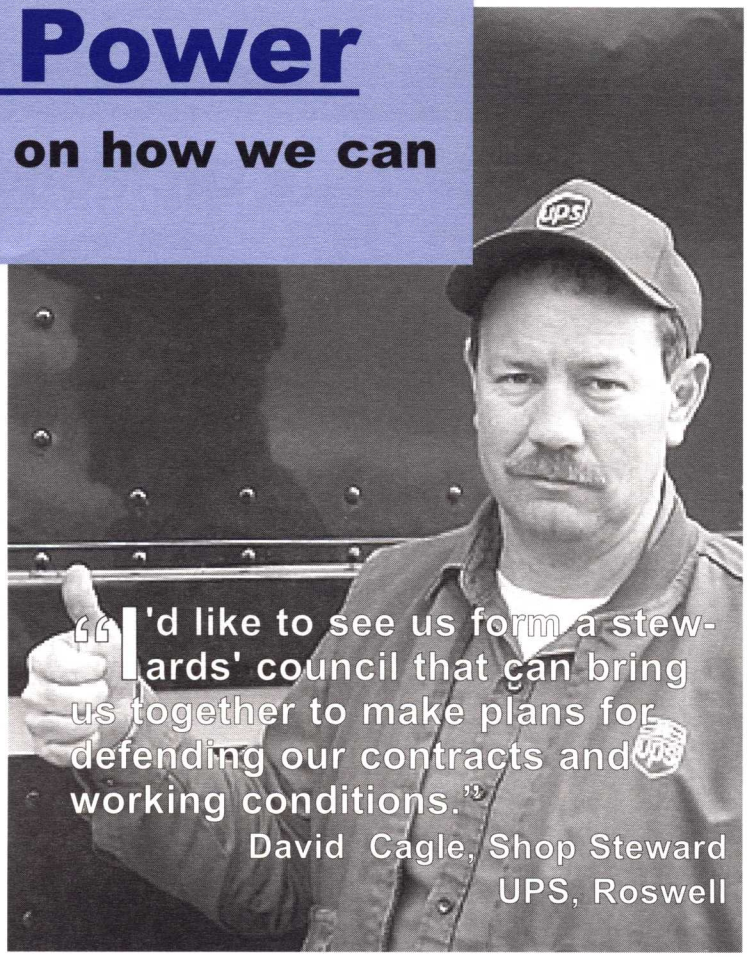
Welcome to *Local 728 at Work*–your new union newsletter. Each issue will report on the challenges working Teamsters face and how Local 728 members are working to meet those challenges.

We'll also seek your ideas for new programs that can strengthen Local 728.

David Cagle, a shop steward at UPS, says "Support, coordination and education for stewards has got to be a top priority." And he's got an idea for how to do it.

Cagle says Local 728 should form a Stewards' Council that would bring stewards together to get training and make plans for enforcing our rights.

Like this idea? Got another? Send your comments to Local 728 at Work, 2540 Lakewood Avenue SW Atlanta, Georgia 30315.


"I'd like to see us form a stewards' council that can bring us together to make plans for defending our contracts and working conditions."
David Cagle, Shop Steward
UPS, Roswell

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